

Office of Congressman Charles W. Dent
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For Immediate Release
March 1, 2007

Press Contact: Gregg W. Bortz
610-861-9734 or (cell) 202-222-5118

Rep. Dent rejects 'secret ballot elimination act'

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (PA-15) voted against the ironically named Employee Free Choice Act, which would eliminate a worker's right to vote to unionize in a democratic secret ballot election.

This bill would overturn part of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act that gives workers rights to unionize through a secret ballot election. Should this legislation become law, employees would be stripped of their right to a secret ballot election which honors their privacy when deciding if they want to choose a particular union to serve as their collective bargaining agent. Rather, the National Labor Relations Board would be directed to recognize a union through a basic card-check process.

"This bill should be called the 'Secret Ballot Elimination Act,' " Congressman Dent said. "Would we stand for this kind of system to elect members of Congress, the state legislature, or city council? Secret-ballot voting is a cornerstone of our democratic system, and the American people should not be denied this right in any aspect of their lives."

Congressman Dent observed some inconsistency in the Majority's position. In a letter written by George Miller (CA-7), one of the bill's most powerful sponsors, to *Mexican* government officials, Mr. Miller said that "a secret ballot is absolutely necessary in order to ensure that workers are not intimidated into voting for a union they might not otherwise choose." And

yet, Congressman Dent added, “this bill denies this same fundamental right to American workers.”

“I fully support workers’ rights to organize and to bargain collectively under the National Labor Relations Act and related laws,” Congressman Dent said. “But Americans have likewise traditionally enjoyed the right to vote the way their conscience dictates without having to look over their shoulder and worry about what the government, or their employers, or anyone else might think. This bill denies that fundamental privacy right.”

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